

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR REDIRECTING NETWORK TRAFFIC

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Methods and apparatus are described for intelligently redirecting and/or processing traffic. In one embodiment, a method of facilitating redirection of traffic sent from a first processing device (e.g., a client) to a second processing device (e.g., a server) is disclosed. At a third processing device (e.g., a router) associated with a plurality of traffic handling systems (e.g., cache systems), traffic information is received from at least a portion of the associated traffic handling systems. The traffic information specifies which data should be redirected to the portion of associated traffic handling systems. It is determined how to redirect data received by the third processing device to a selected traffic handling system based on the received traffic information received from at least one of the associated traffic handling systems. In one aspect, the determination of redirecting data is accomplished by communicating the traffic information to at least a designated one of the associated traffic handling systems and receiving traffic redirection information from the designated traffic handling system at the third processing device. In another aspect, a packet is received in the third processing device from the first processing device destined for the second processing device, and the packet is redirected to a selected one of the traffic handling systems based on the traffic redirection information. In another method implementation, at a designated traffic handling system associated with a plurality of traffic handling systems and one or more routers, traffic information is received from at least one of the routers. The traffic information specifies which data should be redirected to which associated traffic handling systems. Traffic portions are allocated to each traffic handling system based on the received traffic information. In another implementation, each traffic handling system may determine that particular redirected packets should be transmitted back to the redirecting router and reinserted into the original traffic flow.